

We Claim

1. ~~A dried pet food comprising a matrix including a denatured protein source, a gelatinized carbohydrate source; insoluble fiber; and a humectant in an amount sufficient for reducing brittleness of the matrix.~~
2. A dried pet food according to claim 1 which comprises about 0.5% to about 5% by weight of a humectant.
3. A dried pet food according to claim 2 in which the humectant is glycerin.
4. A dried pet food according to claim 1 which comprises about 2% to about 15% by weight of insoluble fiber.
5. A dried pet food according to claim 4 in which the insoluble fiber is a cellulose fiber.
6. A dried pet food according to claim 1 which has a density of about 250 kg/m³ to about 320 kg/m³.
7. ~~A dried pet food according to claim 1 which has a length of at least 6 mm, a thickness of at least 6 mm, and in which the minimum distance from a center of gravity of the matrix to a surface of the matrix is about 3 mm.~~
8. A dried pet food comprising a matrix including a gelatinized protein source, a gelatinized carbohydrate source; about 2% to about 15% by weight of insoluble fiber; and about 0.5% to about 5% by weight of a humectant for reducing brittleness of the matrix.
9. A dried pet food according to claim 8 in which the humectant is glycerin.
10. A dried pet food according to claim 8 in which the insoluble fiber is a cellulose fiber.
11. A dried pet food according to claim 8 which has a density of about 250 kg/m³ to about 320 kg/m³.

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12. A dried pet food according to claim 8 which has a length of at least 6 mm, a thickness of at least 6 mm, and in which the minimum distance from a center of gravity of the matrix to a surface of the matrix is about 3 mm.

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13. A dried pet food comprising a matrix including a gelatinized protein source, a gelatinized carbohydrate source; insoluble fiber; and a humectant in an amount sufficient for reducing brittleness of the matrix, the matrix having a length of at least 6 mm, a thickness of at least 6 mm, and in which the minimum distance from a center of gravity of the matrix to a surface of the matrix is about 3 mm.

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14. A dried pet food according to claim 13 which comprises about 0.5% to about 5% by weight of a humectant.

15. A dried pet food according to claim 14 in which the humectant is glycerin.

16. A dried pet food according to claim 13 which comprises about 2% to about 15% by weight of insoluble fiber.

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17. A dried pet food according to claim 16 in which the insoluble fiber is a cellulose fiber.

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18. A dried pet food according to claim 13 which has a density of about 250 kg/m³ to about 320 kg/m³.

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19. A dried pet food according to claim 13 into which a probe, having a contact area of about 1 mm² and operated at a speed of about 5 mm/s, penetrates into the matrix for a distance of at least 30% of the thickness of the matrix prior to breaking of the matrix.

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20. A method of reducing calculus and plaque build up on a pet's teeth, the method comprising administering to the pet a dried pet food having a gelatinized matrix including a protein source, a carbohydrate source, insoluble fiber, and a humectant, the pet food having reduced brittleness.

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